



"Change your thoughts and you change your world." ~ Norman Vincent Peale

The nature of our thoughts determines the quality of our life whether it is sad, happy and contented. Happy, optimistic, positive thoughts, emotions, and feelings generate a zing in our system which makes the blood flow freely and heart beat joyously. They create a spring in our feet and spur us to action. Let us remember the age-old saying that the mind- thoughts- can move the mountains. Pessimistic, sad and gloomy thoughts, on the other hand, create inertia and force us to stay bed-bound.

Our actions are the practical manifestations of our thoughts.

It is quite clear, therefore, that we must bring about a change in the way we think in order to create happiness and sense of fulfillment in our life. A good thing about our brain is that it willingly adopts any changes that we bring about in our thinking patterns.

Here is a list of 15 ways you can change your thoughts and give a positive direction to your life.

1. CHANGE YOUR THOUGHTS BY CREATING POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations are not always positive. They can be negative as well. The hexes created by the witches are negative affirmations.

The truth is that most people are given to making negative affirmations. When you think repeatedly that you are not going to succeed in a particular project, it is a negative affirmation. Affirmations, both negative and positive impact the neurological functioning of the brain.

Positive affirmations are like mantras. They have a sacred and spiritual force about them. Let us be clear about creating positive affirmations. They should not be normative or weak.

Thoughts such as I 'should', 'ought to' or 'abstain from' are normative.

Examples of negative affirmations are: 'I can't' do this. It is 'quite difficult'. On the hand, affirmations should be forceful and determined such as 'I can', 'I will', or 'I am going to'. As mentioned above, your brain is always adapting to your thought patterns and directs your organs to act accordingly.

2. LEARN TO APPLY FULL STOP

We keep mulling over our misfortunes, the perceived wrongs committed to us by those who we have loved and stood by so sincerely. We never stop cursing ourselves for the mistakes that we think we have committed. What would have happened if I had done this or that? What would happen if I do this or that in future?

This is not to suggest we should not learn from our past mistakes or plan our future intelligently. The only thing is we should stop thinking over and over once we have learned from our past and decided about our future.

3. LET GO OF THE NEED TO BE MASOCHISTIC

Quite often we love to wallow in our misery. We enjoy creating self-punishing thoughts or being gloomy and pessimistic. Here is an example:

“If I start selling candles, the sun will stop setting,

If I start selling shrouds, people will stop dying.”

I was born unlucky. Nothing good will ever occur to me.

Such thoughts not only cause a harmful impact on the mind, but they adversely affect your physical health as well.

4. CHANGE YOUR THOUGHTS BY COUNTING YOUR JOYS AND BLESSINGS

Most people take their joys and blessings for granted and start grumbling about what they do not have; or, when they are faced with problems and troubles. Just think of those who are less fortunate than you. Or, think of a situation that could have been worse than it is now. You are crying because you have hurt your knee in an accident. What, if the leg itself had broken? See the filled half of the glass for satisfaction and the empty half with a resolve to fill it.

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.” ~ Melody Beattie

5. APPRECIATE AND ENJOY WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE

A great way to change your thoughts is to appreciate and enjoy what you already have. This is not to suggest that you should not aspire for a still better life. Enjoy whatever amount of success you have achieved instead of feeling sad about what you have not been able to achieve. There is nothing wrong with always fixing higher benchmarks or goals, but failure to reach them should not spoil your enjoyment of what you already have.

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"If you realize that you have enough, you are truly rich." ~ Lao Tzu

6. SAVOR THE JOYS OF YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

It is one thing to achieve your goal; it is another to enjoy it after you have achieved it. For example, you marry a woman of your dreams, but get bored with her soon thereafter and start looking for a new one. This is one of the most common causes of marital discords and breaks up.

"There are two things to aim at in life: first, to get what you want; and after that, to enjoy it. Only the wisest of mankind achieve the second." ~ Logan Pearsall Smith

7. STAND ERECT AND HOLD YOUR HEAD HIGH IN TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES

We often tend to feel demoralized in adverse conditions. We stop and feel low as if we are bending under their weight. This happens both literally and figuratively. You will, however, surely feel better if you try to lift your spirits and also your head like a person determined to take up the challenge. This is the best way to get out of the depression. Try it.

8. ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE PLAYFUL AND CHILDLIKE

Children are known for innocence and simplicity of mind. They soon forget their quarrels with their friends and start playing together once again. This is the reason that generally they are always happy and smiling. Translated into the language of the adults, we should learn to forget and forgive.

"The great man is he who does not lose his child's-heart." ~ Mencius, Book IV

9. SEEK HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT IN THE PRESENT

Do not associate happiness with future events. I will be happy when things happen this way. It is like postponing your happiness to an unsure future. The better alternative is to try to postpone your sorrow to some future moment as much as you can. The time to be happy is to-day because yesterday has already passed and you cannot be sure that tomorrow will bring any happiness.

“How simple it is to see that we can only be happy now, and there will never be a time when it is not now.” ~ Gerald Jampolsky

10. BE A MASTER OF YOUR MOODS

Be a master rather than a servant of your own moods. You are the ruler of the kingdom of happiness. Do not allow other people or circumstances to make you happy or sad. Do not depend on material possessions to create happiness for you. It is for you to choose to be happy whatever the situation. Do not allow your heart to break up if your loved one has ditched you. If he/she can be happy without you so can you.

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11. WAKE UP WITH A RESOLVE TO STAY HAPPY DURING THE DAY

Resolve the first thing as you wake up in the morning to remain happy throughout the day. Spend some time with the flowers and plants in your garden. Listen to the songs of the birds in the trees or watch them flying high in the skies. Or, go out for a walk in the park nearby. Remember your resolve to remain calm as soon as you sense trouble coming. You owe yourself an ethical duty to remain happy.

12. YOUR BODY IS YOUR TEMPLE, HONOR IT

Keep the temple of your body neat, clean and well-ventilated. Do not dump garbage of dirty, negative thoughts and toxic junk food in it. It is really difficult to remain happy when you are sick physically or mentally. There is a close relationship between the mind and the body. Take physical exercises regularly according to your constitutional needs. Subscribe to some inspiring- thought-for- the- day service to motivate you to stay happy during the day.

13. MEDITATE DAILY

Most yoga and meditation gurus have complicated the process of meditation by using incomprehensible jargon about its practice and goals. Consequently, most people tend to doze off during the meditation sessions and stop practicing meditation altogether.

Also, take a stock of your day in the evening. Remember the little good things that happened. You were not held up in traffic snarls. Your car ran smoothly. There was no problem with your boss and colleagues. You had a delicious lunch or coffee. Thank your stars for a nice and happy day. This will fill you with gratitude and make you a happier person.

“During meditation, your metabolism and your breath rate go down to a level of rest, twice that of deep sleep.” ~ Mike Love

14. FOCUS ON CHANGING YOURSELF INSTEAD OF CHANGING THE WORLD AROUND YOU

It is impossible to change the world around you. So stop fretting when people do not come up to your expectations. The best course is to change yourself or at least adjust with the people or situations you do not like.

“Never underestimate your power to change yourself; never overestimate your power to change others.” ~ Wayne Dyer

15. MAKE THE BEST OF WHAT YOU HAVE

It is always better to make the best of what you have rather than pine for what you think is the best. A perfect state occurs only in Utopia and the world you live in is not that kind of ideal place. Do not be worried about the imperfections. The word 'imperfection' is derived from 'perfection'. Even the most imperfect situation has some small element of perfection in it.

You change your life by changing your thoughts. If the thoughts you think are pure, your life will be pure.